

Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

aS21
.A8U51



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Office of
Public Affairs

Selected Speeches and News Releases

January 10 - January 16, 1991

IN THIS ISSUE:

News Releases—

USDA Authorizes Increased Marketings of Burley Tobacco

USDA Announces Prevailing World Market Price for Upland Cotton

1991 Grazing Fees Set for Western National Forests

Herbicides Lend A Hand in Weeds' Self-Destruction

Foreign Biocontrol Agents Help Combat Weed Pests

USDA Decides to Permit Importation of Sandpears from Chile

USDA Proposes to Lift Import Restrictions on Mexican Citrus Fruit

USDA Announces Prevailing World Market Rice Prices

**USDA Announces Market Promotion Program Allocations for Fiscal
1991**

**Forest Service, Nature Conservancy Join Forces to Conserve Biological
Diversity**

Scientists Sought for USDA Research

News Releases

U.S. Department of Agriculture • Office of Public Affairs

USDA AUTHORIZES INCREASED MARKETINGS OF BURLEY TOBACCO

WASHINGTON, Jan. 10—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today authorized tobacco producers to market additional 1990 crop burley tobacco without incurring marketing penalties.

The maximum quantity of additional marketings a producer is allowed under today's authorization is an amount equal to 5 percent of the farm's basic quota. For example, a producer on a farm having a basic quota of 1,000 pounds and an effective quota of 16,000 pounds could market an additional 50 pounds of tobacco without incurring a penalty.

Under current law, the secretary has authority to encourage additional marketing of burley tobacco, up to 5 percent of the basic quota on the farm on which the tobacco was produced, to meet normal demands of export and domestic markets.

The additional quantity of burley tobacco that is marketed under this authorization will be eligible for price support at the same level as other burley tobacco marketed from the farm and will not be deducted as an overmarketing when determining the farm's 1991 burley quota.

Producers may obtain additional information from their local Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service offices.

Bruce Merkle (202) 447-8206

#

USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICE FOR UPLAND COTTON

WASHINGTON, Jan. 10—Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard T. Crowder today announced the prevailing world market price, adjusted to U.S. quality and location (adjusted world price), for Strict Low Middling (SLM) 1-1/16 inch (micronaire 3.5-4.9) upland cotton (base quality) and the coarse count adjustment in effect from 12:01 a.m. Friday, Jan. 11, through midnight Thursday, Jan. 17.

Since the adjusted world price (AWP) is above the 1989 and 1990 crop

base quality loan rates of 50.00 and 50.27 cents per pound, respectively, the loan repayment rates for the 1989 and 1990 crops of upland cotton during this period are equal to the respective loan rates for the specific quality and location.

The AWP will continue to be used to determine the value of upland cotton that is obtained in exchange for commodity certificates. Because the AWP in effect is above the established loan rate, loan deficiency payments are not available for 1990-crop upland cotton sold during this period.

Based on data for the week ending Jan. 10, the AWP for upland cotton and the coarse count adjustment are determined as follows:

Adjusted World Price	
Northern Europe Price	83.29
Adjustments:	
Average U.S. spot market location	13.57
SLM 1-1/16 inch cotton	2.15
Average U.S. location	0.35
Sum of Adjustments	<u>-16.07</u>
ADJUSTED WORLD PRICE	67.22 cents/lb.
Coarse Count Adjustment	
Northern Europe Price	83.29
Northern Europe Coarse Count Price	<u>-76.40</u>
	6.89
Adjustment to SLM 1-inch cotton	<u>-4.10</u>
COARSE COUNT ADJUSTMENT	2.79 cents/lb.

The next AWP and coarse count adjustment announcement will be made on Thursday, Jan. 17.

Charles Cunningham (202) 447-7954

#

1991 GRAZING FEES SET FOR WESTERN NATIONAL FORESTS

WASHINGTON, Jan. 11—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service today announced the fee for grazing livestock on national forests in Western states will be \$1.97 per head per month (head month), effective March 1—a 16-cent increase over 1990 levels.

Forest Service Chief F. Dale Robertson said the fee is going up because prices farmers and ranchers receive for beef cattle have increased, and because private grazing-land lease rates have increased in the states involved.

The grazing fee for national forests in the 16 Western states is determined by a formula which annually adjusts 1966 base fair market values of livestock grazing use and occupancy of national forests. Factors considered are changes in private grazing-land lease rates; the difference between total costs of grazing on public and private lands; beef cattle prices received by livestock producers; and the costs of producing livestock.

The new fee applies to national forests in the states of Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

For grazing fee purposes, a head month is a month's use and occupancy of range by one weaned or adult cow, bull, steer, heifer, horse, burro, or mule; or five sheep or goats.

Diane Hitchings (202) 475-3778

#

HERBICIDES LEND A HAND IN WEEDS' SELF-DESTRUCTION

WASHINGTON—Some herbicides fight weeds in crops by causing the weeds to overdose on their own natural chemicals, a U.S. Department of Agriculture scientist has found.

Diphenyl ether herbicides, which are used in a variety of crops, including soybeans, cotton and peanuts, disrupt the weed's production of chlorophyll.

Plants use chlorophyll to make food for themselves. Chlorophyll gives plants their characteristic green color. When chlorophyll manufacture is disrupted by the diphenyl ether herbicides, a natural compound normally

used by the weed in making chlorophyll builds up. This compound absorbs light and interacts with oxygen to produce a form of toxic oxygen that destroys the weed's cell membranes, said Stephen O. Duke of USDA's Agricultural Research Service.

Duke said diphenyl ether herbicides, a class that includes the herbicides acifluorfen, oxyfluorfen and oxadiazon, inhibit a specific enzyme in the plant. This enzyme normally produces a compound called protoporphyrin IX as a step in making chlorophyll.

When production of protoporphyrin IX is halted by the herbicides, one of the ingredients used to make it accumulates in the plant. It is this ingredient, called protoporphyrinogen IX, that interacts with oxygen, with deadly results for the weed.

The discovery of how diphenyl ether herbicides work provides important insights on how plants produce chlorophyll, Duke said.

"We're finding out a lot about how chlorophyll synthesis is regulated in the plant," he said. "This could be very useful information in manipulating how plants respond to stress such as cold, heat or drought.

"Often, a plant under stress becomes yellow because it's losing chlorophyll faster than it can make it. If we can control that chlorophyll loss, we could help the plant endure stress."

Duke and fellow researchers at ARS' Southern Weed Science Laboratory at Stoneville, Miss., also hope to use their discoveries about how the herbicides affect chlorophyll production to make herbicides control a broader spectrum of weeds or to reduce the amount of herbicide needed.

For example, earlier studies at the University of Illinois showed that one chlorophyll precursor, aminolevulinic acid or ALA, will kill weeds, but only if used in large amounts.

"We knew light was required for both ALA and commercial diphenyl ether herbicides to be effective, and we thought there might be some interesting interactions between ALA and the herbicides," Duke said. "We combined these herbicides with ALA to see if we could reduce the amounts needed of both."

The scientists found that when ALA was added to diphenyl ether herbicides, some weeds formerly tolerant to those herbicides became sensitive to them.

Diphenyl ether herbicides alone will kill some types of broadleaf weeds and some grasses, but not others. "Now we're trying to pin down what's

going on with these herbicides in tolerant plants,” Duke said. “We want to determine why some weed species are very sensitive, and others are not.”

Sandy Miller Hays (301) 344-4089

Issued: Jan. 11, 1991

#

FOREIGN BIOCONTROL AGENTS HELP COMBAT WEED PESTS

WASHINGTON—Special crews of helpful weed-fighting bugs and microorganisms are being imported into the United States in increasingly larger numbers. They are being recruited, tested and shipped by U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists based in Rome, Italy.

The scientists shipped to the United States 33 times more weed enemies in 1990 than 1980, according to a new report by USDA’s Agricultural Research Service. Insects, mites and pathogens are tested overseas and in this country, and then released, as natural or biological controls, to devour or otherwise control alien weeds that infest U.S. range, pasture and field crops.

“The growth in weed biocontrol shipments has been explosive,” said Lloyd Knutson, a co-author of the report and director of ARS’ Biological Control of Weeds Laboratory in Rome.

In 1980, he said, the Rome lab shipped 2,377 individuals of seven weed-attacking species. By 1990, the annual total jumped to 80,175 of 28 species. About 95 percent of the shipments went to the United States, said Knutson, in Baltimore this week for a meeting of biological control experts.

ARS scientists based in Rome “go back to the source,” he said, to find biocontrols. Many weeds escaped these natural foes when they invaded the U.S. from origins in Europe, western and central Asia, Africa or the Middle East.

“We’ve stepped up the hunt for natural enemies as alternatives to chemical herbicides,” Knutson said. “Herbicides account for about 80 percent of U.S. pesticide use, and some of them potentially can injure subsequent crops or move into ground water.” In some areas, weeds are showing resistance to the chemicals, he added.

Weeds on the Rome lab’s “most wanted” list include several range and

pasture pests—leafy spurge, yellow starthistle, knapweeds, musk thistle—and field bindweed, which infests cropland and grain fields. Thirteen insect and mite species have been shipped to the United States to combat these weeds, Knutson said. Rome scientists also test rusts and other microorganisms that are natural enemies of weeds.

Since the Rome lab opened in 1959, the scientists “have worked on 26 species of U.S. weeds and over 60 candidate biological control agents, resulting in the establishment of 17 species attacking 15 weeds. Substantial control of musk thistle, puncture vine, Jamaica feverplant, tansy ragwort and skeleton weed has been achieved, and several other target weeds are under increasing stress by natural enemies introduced by the laboratory scientists.”

“Today,” said Knutson, “the idea of using natural enemies is more familiar, but most people don’t realize that biocontrol candidates come down the gangplank only after years of research in the United States and overseas. You have to be a combination of Sherlock Holmes and Mary Poppins to find a biocontrol insect and determine how to get the best results from it.”

When explorers find a natural enemy, its identity is pinned down by scientists at the ARS Systematic Entomology Laboratory in Beltsville, Md., or by other taxonomists.

“We have to be sure that we know exactly which species we’re studying. We can’t have crop or endangered plants put at risk by a different biocontrol species that might prefer them to a target weed,” Knutson said.

Rome scientists run several kinds of tests to make sure the potential biocontrol agent won’t assault valuable plants. Also, the control can’t harbor diseases or parasites that could harm beneficial insects such as honey bees.

The scientists also determine what parts of a weed a biocontrol attacks—seed, flowers, leaves, roots or other parts—and examine the biocontrol’s life cycle and preferred habitat. “These biocontrols are our babies! We know what they like to eat and where they like to be,” said ARS entomologist Rouhollah Sobhian. Sobhian is employed by the Rome lab and works most of the year in a substation in Thessaloniki, Greece.

In 1981, Sobhian discovered *Eustenopus villosus* weevils eating the developing seeds of yellow starthistle weeds in Greece. Yellow starthistle, the report says, “entered North America from Eurasia and is particularly

noxious in the western states, infesting mainly rangelands, but also fields of wheat, oats, barley” and other crops.

Knutson said that new weed biocontrols like *E. villosus* require an import permit for studies or releases in this country. This “passport,” from USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, is obtained only after a special review board rigorously evaluates the research results and release plans.

Biocontrols travelling to the U.S. on commercial airline flights are shipped inside a comfortable, secure container. Sometimes, a scientist will hand-carry boxes of biocontrols.

Nine years of research by Sobhian and Luca Fornasari of the Rome lab were required before the *E. villosus* weevils were given a permit and shipped for further studies to ARS entomologist Charles E. Turner in Albany, Calif. Turner and cooperating scientists released the weevils last summer in California, Oregon, Washington and Idaho. *E. villosus* is the fourth natural enemy of starthistle discovered by Sobhian and released in the United States. Later this year, a fifth one—a weevil—may be released by Albany scientists.

Newly imported biocontrols are tested further as needed by U.S. scientists and then multiplied and released to go to work on weeds. Weed biocontrol is a joint venture of scientists in ARS and many cooperating institutions in the U.S. and abroad, according to the report. Much of the work involves ARS scientists in Albany; Bozeman, Mont.; Temple, Texas; Frederick, Md.; an APHIS facility in Mission, Texas, that mass-rears insects by the millions, and many universities and state agencies.

Knutson said other overseas labs of ARS conduct research on biocontrols of many insect pests, as well as weeds. The scientists are based at—

- * European Parasite Laboratory, Behoust, France;
- * Asian Parasite Laboratory, Seoul, South Korea;
- * Biological Control of Weeds Laboratory, Hurlingham, Argentina; and
- * Australian Biocontrol Laboratory, Townsville, Australia.

Jim De Quattro (301) 344-3648

Issued: Jan. 14, 1991

#

USDA DECIDES TO PERMIT IMPORTATION OF SANDPEARS FROM CHILE

WASHINGTON, Jan. 14—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has decided to permit imports of sandpears from areas of Chile that are free of the Mediterranean fruit fly (Medfly).

“The Ministry of Agriculture of Chile will issue certificates identifying each shipment and stating that the sandpears (*Pyrus pyrifolia*) originated in Medfly-free areas,” said James W. Glosser, administrator of USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

Most of Chile is considered free of the Medfly, one of the most damaging exotic pests that threatens the U.S. fruit and vegetable industry. Only the northern Chilean provinces of Arica, Iquique and Parinacota are considered infested. Sandpears from these provinces may be imported only if they are treated for Medfly.

The decision was published as a proposal on Nov. 16 with a 15-day deadline for comments. None were received by the deadline, and the proposal is being adopted without changes.

As a result, U.S. consumers will gain a winter source of sandpears—the seasons in Chile are opposite those in the United States. Imports are expected only from mid-January through February. Government officials in Chile estimate that about 900 tons will be sent during this period in 1991.

The final rule was effective on signature on Jan. 11 and is scheduled to be published in the Jan. 17 Federal Register as docket 90-233.

Amichai Heppner (301) 436-5222

#

USDA PROPOSES TO LIFT IMPORT RESTRICTIONS ON MEXICAN CITRUS FRUIT

WASHINGTON, Jan. 15—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is proposing to eliminate its quarantine on citrus fruit from Mexico, imposed in 1983 because citrus canker was thought to be present in that country.

“In 1983, we believed that key limes from Mexico might be infected with a form of citrus canker,” said James W. Glosser, administrator of USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. “We therefore

banned key limes and imposed restrictions on other citrus fruits from Mexico that could carry citrus canker. We propose to lift these restrictions because we have determined that citrus canker is not present in Mexico.”

Citrus canker is a bacterial infection that damages leaves, twigs and fruit of citrus and some related plant species. The United States is free of citrus canker, except for two small quarantined areas in Florida where an eradication program is underway.

Glosser said the proposal to drop current citrus canker regulations affecting Mexico would:

- Lift the ban on importing the fruit and peels of key limes (a single lime species) from anywhere in Mexico;
- Lift a ban on all other citrus fruit produced in areas of Mexico that had been considered infested with citrus canker;
- Remove a requirement that citrus fruit imported from Mexico be decontaminated to remove the risk of introducing citrus canker; and
- Remove special packing requirements for citrus.

Glosser emphasized, however, that regulations to keep out exotic fruit flies remain in effect. Depending upon its origin within Mexico, citrus (other than limes) must be treated for fruit flies in order to be imported into the United States. Furthermore, all imported agricultural products are inspected to ensure they are free from pests and prohibited contaminants.

Notice of the proposed rule change to rescind regulations concerned with citrus canker in Mexico was published in the Jan. 11 Federal Register. Comments will be accepted if they are received on or before Feb. 11. An original and three copies of written comments referring to docket 90-226 should be sent to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development; PPD, APHIS, USDA; Room 866, Federal Building; 6505 Belcrest Road; Hyattsville, Md. 20782. Comments may be inspected as soon as received at USDA, Rm. 1141-S, 14th Street and Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

Caree Lawrence (301) 436-7799

#

USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET RICE PRICES

WASHINGTON, Jan. 15—Under Secretary of Agriculture Richard T. Crowder today announced the prevailing world market prices of milled rice, loan rate basis, as follows:

- long grain whole kernels, 8.30 cents per pound;
- medium grain whole kernels, 7.23 cents per pound;
- short grain whole kernels, 7.24 cents per pound;
- broken kernels, 4.15 cents per pound.

Based upon these prevailing world market prices for milled rice, rough rice world prices are estimated to be:

- long grain, \$5.09 per hundredweight;
- medium grain, \$4.47 per hundredweight;
- short grain, \$4.40 per hundredweight.

The prices announced are effective today at 3 p.m. EST. The next scheduled price announcement will be made Jan. 22 at 3 p.m. EST, although prices may be announced sooner if warranted.

Gene Rosera (202) 447-7923

#

USDA ANNOUNCES MARKET PROMOTION PROGRAM ALLOCATIONS FOR FISCAL 1991

WASHINGTON, Jan. 15—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced 47 projects that will receive \$200 million in Market Promotion Program (MPP) allocations in fiscal 1991.

MPP was authorized by the Food, Agriculture, Conservation, and Trade Act of 1990, which directs USDA to use Commodity Credit Corporation funds or commodities to “encourage the development, maintenance and expansion of commercial export markets for agricultural commodities through cost-share assistance to eligible trade organizations that implement a foreign market development program.”

MPP is similar to the Targeted Export Assistance Program, which was repealed by the 1990 Farm Bill. The TEA program was limited to commodities where exports had been adversely affected by unfair foreign trade practices. While those commodities must be considered a priority

for participation in the MPP, once their promotional needs are satisfied, consideration may be given to assisting other commodity groups.

MPP will be administered by USDA’s Foreign Agricultural Service through cooperative agreements between the Commodity Credit Corporation and agricultural industry representatives (listed below).

Before spending the promotional resources provided in project allocations, recipients must first obtain FAS approval of detailed plans fully describing proposed activities; cost elements including those to be contributed by the recipient organization, U.S. industry or foreign entities; project goals; and project evaluation benchmarks and methods.

For additional information and referral to the appropriate program contact, call (202) 447-5521.

A list of the 47 projects and their allocation amounts follows.

Market Promotion Program Allocations, Fiscal 1991

Organizations	Commodities	Allocations (million \$)
Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute	Salmon (fresh, frozen, canned, dried and smoked)	8.780
American Plywood Association	Solid wood products, excluding paper & pulp (e.g., lumber, millwork, veneer, plywood, particle- board, other panel products and laminated wood products)	6.090
American Soybean Association	Soybeans, soybean oil, meal and products	16.130
California Avocado Commission	Avocados & products	1.030
California Cling Peach Advisory Board	Canned peaches & fruit cocktail	3.620
California Kiwifruit Commission	Fresh kiwifruit	0.830
California Pistachio Commission	Pistachios, raw & roasted	1.030
California Prune Board	Prunes & products thereof	7.030
California Raisin Advisory Board	Raisins & products thereof	8.520
California Strawberry Advisory Board	Strawberries, fresh & frozen	0.670
California Table Grape Commission	Fresh table grapes	3.250
California Tree Fruit Agreement	Plums, peaches, nectarines fresh prunes & Bartlett pears	1.000
California Walnut Commission	Walnuts, shelled & in-shell	8.070

Cherry Marketing Institute Inc.	Processed tart cherries (dried, water-packed, canned, frozen, IQF frozen, juice concentrate & juice products)	0.450
Chocolate Manufacturers Association	Chocolate & sugar confectionery	1.550
Cotton Council International	Raw cotton	18.400
Florida Department of Citrus	Florida fresh & processed citrus	5.330
Ginseng Board of Wisconsin Inc.	Ginseng root	0.158
Hop Growers of America Inc. hop cone pellets, hop extract	Hop cones, ground hop cones	0.172
Kentucky Distillers' Association	Bourbon whiskey	3.100
Mid-America International Agri-Trade Council (MIATCO)	Regional high-value food products	5.170
National Association of Animal Breeders	Bovine semen, frozen	0.208
National Dry Bean Council	Dry edible beans	0.520
National Forest Products Association	Solid wood products, excluding paper & pulp (e.g. lumber, millwork, veneer plywood, particle- board, other panel and laminated wood products)	5.424
National Honey Board	Natural honey	0.520
National Peanut Council	Peanuts, raw, inshell & processed (including peanut butter, roasted, flavored/ coated and peanut candy)	4.620
National Potato Promotion Board	Frozen french fried potatoes frozen potato products, fresh potatoes & seed potatoes	3.930
National Sunflower Association	Sunflowerseed, sunflowerseed oil & confection sunflowerseed	1.560
Northwest Cherry Growers	Fresh sweet cherries	1.200
Oregon-Washington-California Pear Bureau	Fresh pears	0.900
Pacific Coast Canned Pear Service Inc.	Canned and frozen Bartlett pears	0.208
Rice Council for Market Development	Rice, rice products and rice by-products	5.280
Southern United States Trade Association (SUSTA)	Regional high-value food products	2.590

USA Poultry & Egg Export Council Inc.	Poultry, eggs, further processed and related products	1.660
U.S. Meat Export Federation	Red meats derived from the bovine, equine, ovine & porcine animal species, including their variety meats/offals & processed products of which they are the major ingredient	13.620
U.S. Mink Export Development Council	Raw and dressed U.S. mink pelts	2.300
Wine Institute	California grape wine	15.000
Western United States Agricultural Trade Association (WUSATA)	Regional high-value food products	6.000
Export Incentive Programs: ¹	Almonds, natural & processed	8.280
	California & Arizona fresh & processed citrus	13.710
	Processed sweet corn (canned whole kernel (golden & white), cream style, and mixtures (e.g. corn with peppers); frozen corn on the cob, cut corn, cream style & mixtures)	3.230
	Concord grape products	1.400
	Dates & products thereof	0.520
	Cranberries, fresh & frozen (concentrate, sauces and drinks)	1.000
	Processed tomato products (including peeled tomatoes, paste, puree, sauces, catsup and juice)	0.600
Reserved by CCC for Evaluation Projects ²		1.000
		TOTAL 200.000

¹Allocations under the Export Incentive Program provide Market Promotion Program funds to eligible private firms for promotion of specific brands of designated commodities. Details and application procedures for Export Incentive Program participation will be announced at a later date.

²This amount has been reserved by the Commodity Credit Corporation to monitor and evaluate MPP program effectiveness.

Sally Klusaritz (202) 447-3448

#

FOREST SERVICE, NATURE CONSERVANCY JOIN FORCES TO CONSERVE BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

WASHINGTON, Jan. 15—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service and The Nature Conservancy will work together to inventory, maintain and improve biological diversity on the national forests and other lands, including lands owned or managed by The Nature Conservancy, under a memorandum of understanding signed by the two organizations here today.

Forest Service Chief F. Dale Robertson said The Nature Conservancy is a leader in conserving biological diversity and possesses special capabilities that can help the Forest Service in this task. "The Conservancy has worked with us for the past several years on projects across the country, and we are delighted to be working with them now on a much broader basis."

Nature Conservancy President John Sawhill said the effectiveness of the agreement lies in its scope. "Conservancy and Forest Service personnel will be working together at all levels to protect plant and animal diversity throughout the United States," he said.

Robertson pointed out that national forest lands have become key to the continued survival and recovery of many species that are threatened, endangered, or in need of special attention.

Cooperative projects planned under the agreement include the inventory and survey of fish, wildlife, and plant species on the national forests and grasslands; identification of specific areas for research; monitoring ecological change; conserving and restoring critical habitats; education programs; and development and implementation of forest management plans for individual national forests. Much of this cooperative activity will focus on protecting threatened, endangered, and sensitive plant and animal species.

The Forest Service manages 191 million acres—an area larger than Texas—of national forests and grasslands, from subarctic Alaska to tropical Puerto Rico. Because of their climatic and geographic diversity, these national forests and grasslands rank chief among the United States' most important reservoirs of biodiversity.

Most nonmarine species in the United States can be found on these national forest lands. The national forests provide habitat for at least 194 species listed as threatened or endangered, and another 2,000-plus species that the Forest Service has classified as sensitive.

The Nature Conservancy is an international nonprofit organization committed to preserving biological diversity. The Conservancy maintains offices and programs in 50 states and has established a network of natural heritage programs in more than 75 locations. The Conservancy and its 550,000 members have been responsible for the protection of 5.12 million acres in all 50 states, Canada, Latin America and the Caribbean.

Len Carey (202) 475-3782

#

SCIENTISTS SOUGHT FOR USDA RESEARCH

WASHINGTON, Jan.16—The U.S. Department of Agriculture is seeking 100 scientists who are at the beginning of their research careers to work on projects in such areas as food safety, global change, biological control of crop pests and genetic engineering of plants.

The scientists will work for up to two years as research associates at laboratories operated across the country by USDA's Agricultural Research Service, said R. Dean Plowman, ARS administrator. Applicants must have a doctorate and should have less than four years postdoctoral experience. Research associates are paid a base salary of \$31,116 to \$37,294.

ARS will spend approximately \$4.5 million on the program this year, Plowman said. This marks the agency's eleventh year of hiring research associates to work with veteran scientists.

"This program offers the Agricultural Research Service an opportunity to draw on the best new scientific talent available," Plowman said. "We have seen some significant developments emerge from this program including a technique to diagnose trichinosis in swine, a method of estimating the probability of rainfall and ways to control toxin-producing fungi when crops germinate."

Plowman said applications are being accepted now from potential research associates. Each associate will work on one of 100 projects selected from among 445 proposals submitted by ARS scientists.

Richard G. Powell, a chemist and research leader at the ARS Bioactive Constituents Research unit at Peoria, Ill., received the agency's T.W. Edminster Award for submitting the outstanding proposal. The research associates program began during Edminster's tenure as ARS administrator from 1971 to 1980.

Powell's proposal involves the study of fumonisin, a natural toxin produced in corn by the fungus *Fusarium moniliforme*. Powell's proposal calls for research on the ability of common organisms in the soil to break fumonisin down into non-toxic products. The project also involves searching for ways to chemically treat contaminated corn to remove fumonisin.

Other research proposals accepted for funding include:

- *Use of transgenic methods—moving genes from one species to another—to provide disease resistance in chickens;
- *Use of lactose—milk sugar—to control *Salmonella* infection in turkeys;
- *Effects of nutrition on human fetal growth and development;
- *Improved techniques for predicting soil erosion on fragile, highly erodible soils;
- *Effects of land use and farm management practices on atmospheric carbon dioxide levels;
- *Transfer of genes in plant pollen to give the plants disease resistance;
- and
- *Studies of dietary fat and the efficiency of the human immune system.

Application forms and descriptions of positions are available from Nancy L. Bakes, Personnel Division (P), USDA-ARS, 6305 Ivy Lane, Room 139, Greenbelt, Md. 20770, telephone (301) 344-2796.

Sandy Miller Hays (301) 344-4089

#

